

Testimony of

Kristin Archambault

Mansfield Educator

Before the

Education Committee

March 15, 2023

Good afternoon, Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty, and members of the Education Committee.

I testify today in support of House Bill 6884. This bill takes important steps toward addressing the educator shortage in Connecticut, showing educators that theirs is a respected profession, and ensuring that our classrooms and schools can provide the best possible education for our students.

Working during the pandemic was the most difficult thing I have ever done, both physically and mentally. Because students were initially placed in cohorts, it doubled the number of classes I taught. On top of that, I had students online and students in my classroom simultaneously. It was unsustainable. The first eight months teachers were all unvaccinated. It was so scary. I had regular nightmares. I developed a horrible case of TMJ from the stress I was under and paid hundreds of dollars out of pocket for treatment that was not covered by my dental insurance. Teachers like me went above and beyond to do our jobs so our students' parents could resume their jobs and contribute to the state's economy. A small increase in our retirement benefits is a way for the state to recognize our hard work and dedication during the pandemic.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

